

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 6-21 remain for consideration. Claims 4 and 5 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 6, 15, and 16 are amended in accordance with the Office Action's recommendation for allowability. The allowability of claim 5 and 13 is acknowledged. All remaining claims are thought to be allowable over the cited art.

The Final Office Action fails to establish that claims 1, 4-12 and 14-21 are anticipated under 35 USC §102(b) by U.S. Patent No. 6,191,994 to Ooishi et al. (hereinafter "Ooishi") for at least the reasons set forth in the response filed on June 29, 2005, which are incorporated herein by reference.

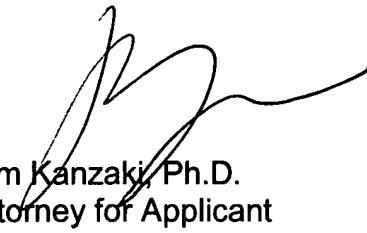
The Applicant nevertheless amends claims 1, 6, 15, and 16 in accordance with the Office Action's recommendation for allowability in order to advance prosecution. As admitted by the Office Action, Ooishi fails to teach both an input stage and an output stage. As amended, claim 1 sets forth at least "an input stage coupled to the common node and adapted to conduct a second portion of the operating current" and "an output stage coupled to the common node and adapted to conduct a third portion of the operating current." As amended, independent claims 6, 15, and 16 set forth substantially similar limitations as discussed above in relation to claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits, therefore, that claims 1, 6, and 15-16 patentably distinguish over Ooishi and are in condition for allowance.

Claims 4-5, 7-12, 14, and 17-21, which are dependent from independent claims 1, 6, and 16, respectively, were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over Ooishi. While Applicant does not acquiesce with the particular rejections to these dependent claims, it is believed that these rejections are now moot in view of the cancellation of claims 4-5 and the amendments made to independent claims 1, 6, and 16 in accordance with the Office Action's recommendation for allowability. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims, and recite additional features which further distinguish these claims from the cited references. Therefore, dependent claims 4-5, 7-12, 14, and 17-21 are also in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Reconsideration and a notice of allowance are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks presented above. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, a telephone call to the undersigned is invited.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on August 18, 2005.

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